

*I don't  
know  
about the  
beginning of this.*

to avenge his militant rela.

# LIEUT.-COM. CHAR. W. READ.

## A Gallant Officer of the Confederate Navy.

Lieutenant Commander Charles W. Read was a native of Mississippi, born in Yazoo county, and came with his parents to Hinds county in early childhood, where he lived until he received the appointment as cadet at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. He spent most of his boyhood days in Jackson. While a mere lad he worked in the office of The Mississippian and with a number of other boys, among whom was his uncle, James M. Dotson, who during the war between the States became major of the Tenth Mississippi Infantry, and was elected a member of the Legislature in 1865, edited a little paper called "The Scrapper of Young America." Graduating from the Naval Academy in 1860, he was assigned to duty on board the United States man-of-war Powhatan and sent to Vera Cruz. When Mississippi seceded he came with the Powhatan to New York and immediately went to Washington and tendered his resignation and came to Montgomery and offered his services to the Confederate States, having been taught at Annapolis that his allegiance was due to his native State, he could no longer serve in the navy of a government of which his State formed no part. On May 1, 1861, he was ordered to report to Captain Rosseau at New Orleans for duty on the Confederate steamer McRea, in command of Lieut. T. R. Huger. This vessel took part in the naval engagement with Farragut's fleet in the river below New Orleans, and was so disabled that it sank at the wharf at New Orleans after landing her crew. After the fall of New Orleans he reported for duty at Richmond, whence the seat of government had been removed, and was assigned to duty erecting batteries on the Potomac. Later

...in the navy of the United States government. When he received the news that his State had seceded from the Federal Union, and believing that his primary allegiance was due to his State, he resigned from the navy and tendered his services to the provisional government of the Confederate States. They were accepted and he was assigned to duty in 1861.

It is not within the scope of this tribute to follow his eventful life through the four years of war between the sections. But it may be truthfully said, that in whatever position the fortune of war placed him, he was equal to every emergency, performing acts of valor and heroism that are second to none in the history of those eventful times.

They constitute a part of that glorious renown achieved by Southern prowess upon land and sea that we cherish with peculiar pride, and which we shall transmit to our children as the dearest part of their heritage, of which no man and no nation of men can ever deprive them.

Resolved, That in the death of Capt. Read the country has lost one of its purest patriots and noblest heroes, and one whose whole life was guided by principles of honor and duty, and as such is worthy of imitation.

Resolved further, That we tender to his grief-stricken wife and family assurances of the sympathies of the members of this camp of Confederate veterans.

Resolved further, That the secretary be instructed to furnish his widow with a properly engrossed copy of this tribute and that it be published in the city papers, and also in the Jackson Clarion-Ledger.

After the adoption of the resolutions Dr. R. H. Whitfield moved that Capt. W. H. Hardy make remarks on the life and character of Capt. Read at the First Baptist church.

The motion was adopted. On motion the camp then adjourned.

## A Telegram from Gen. Beauregard.

On yesterday Mrs. Capt. Read received the following telegram from Gen. G. T. Beauregard:

NEW ORLEANS, JANUARY 27.

Mrs. C. W. Read:

I sympathize deeply in the death of your husband, who was one of our Confederate heroes.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

Charles W. Read, of the Confederate States navy, not hardly called "the last of the South," who died in New Orleans, Miss., on the 27th of March, 1861, was a native Mississippian, born in Yazoo county in the year 1840. He had not entered upon the career of a United States officer when the outbreak of the war caused him to resign his commission and offer his services to the new republic, which among its many heroes had none more devoted than those who during the war were captured and captured the United States revenue cutter Galib, burning in the harbor of Portland, Me., and who at the close of the war so nearly succeeded in passing the lower river forts with the Webb, which had run up and sailed the Confederate flag opposite Jackson square in New Orleans, and by the nearest accident was intercepted before she could reach the sea. His exploits and adventures read like the stories of romance, and will be told with admiration when greater achievements are forgotten, "Winning the crown of our race to a descent from the Vikings of old."

*I don't know where  
the ending of this is.*

## A Gallant Officer of the Confederate Navy Passes Away.

ment to Dr. Rice for treatment, and Dr. Rice, in turn, referred to Dr. C. A. Rice, of the East Mississippi Lumber Company, and having great confidence in Dr. Rice's skill as a physician, Capt. Reed came about six weeks ago to his father-in-law's, in this way, Hon. A. R. Carter, so as to be convenient to Dr. Rice for treatment.

Dr. A. A. and being improved by the treatment, he was inspired with some hope of revivifying, and accepted Dr. Hilde's invitation to become his guest for a short time, which he did.

He continued to improve and became healthy and cheerful, and was able to go about his usual duties, and indeed no great improvement under Dr. Hilde's treatment was contemplated, necessitating the postponement of duty at the *Spas* (Zemlinskaya) for days.

But about a week ago - he was taken with the prevailing influenza, although not pneumonia, and in a short time

**Amidst the Group of Other of the  
World's Notables.**

Graciously Donated by His Daughter  
Through Rev. Dr. Bumsy.

**Frequent Review of the Career of the  
Paul Jones of the Confederacy.**

After some songs and recitations, Dr. Wilberforce introduced Rev. Dr. Thos. B. McElrath, and asked him to receive Miss Reid, who was to present to the Society a



1111 Captain Charles W. Reed  
the distinguished Confederate navy

[illegible][illegible]

don't know  
where this date  
came from and  
I believe it to  
be wrong.  
Probably should  
be about 1998

This may be  
 a ~~copy~~ <sup>copy</sup>  
 of your  
 paper

# Dictionary of American Biography. 1935

## Read

Univ. Lib., N. J. State Lib., Rutgers Univ. Lib., and the libraries of the Pa. Hist. Soc. and the Am. Antiquarian Soc.; *Archives of the State of N. J.*, especially 1 ser., vols. VII-X (1883-1886), XXIV-XXIX (1902-1907); *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, July 1893, pp. 190-94; diary of Aaron Leaming, in lib. of Pa. Hist. Soc., Phila.] C. R. W.

**READ, CHARLES WILLIAM** (May 12, 1840-Jan. 25, 1890), Confederate naval officer, was born in Yazoo County, Miss. Nothing is known of his parents or his childhood. He entered the United States Naval Academy in September 1856, and was graduated in June 1860. He served as midshipman aboard the *Pawnee* and the *Powhatan*. When he received news of the secession of Mississippi he forwarded his resignation from Vera Cruz, Mexico, and returned to the United States in March 1861. He reported to the Confederate secretary of the navy, who appointed him an acting midshipman on Apr. 13. He was assigned to duty as sailing master on the cruiser *McRae*, which was shortly converted into a river gunboat with Read as executive officer. In February 1862 he was promoted to be lieutenant-for-the-war. He participated in the Ship Island expedition in July, in the successful night attack on the blockading squadron at the Head of the Passes in October, in the unsuccessful defense of Island No. 10, Tenn.; and New Madrid, Mo., and in the unfortunate operations below New Orleans in March and April of the following year. Shortly after the attack began on Apr. 24, the captain was mortally wounded, and the command devolved on Read, who fought the *McRae* with gallantry. After the débâcle at New Orleans he was ordered to the squadron stationed below Fort Pillow, Tenn., being assigned first to a shore battery, then to the C.S.S. *Arkansas*. He commanded the stern gun division of this ram in her five brilliant engagements during July and August. He was next assigned to a shore battery at Port Hudson, La., and was promoted in October to the rank of second lieutenant in the Regular Navy.

On account of his reputation for "gunnery, coolness and determination," he was assigned to the cruiser *Florida*, then in Mobile harbor (E. M. Maffitt, *post*, p. 259). He remained with her from November 1862 until early the following May when Capt. John Newland Maffitt [q.v.] placed him in command of the prize brig *Clarence* (off Brazil), and ordered him to raid the coast of the United States. His crew consisted of one officer and twenty men, and his armament of one boat howitzer, which he supplemented by an imposing battery of dummy guns made from spars. He took twenty-one prizes in as many days be-

## Read

tween the latitude of Charleston, S. C., and Portland, Me. Thirteen of them were burned, six bonded, and two recaptured. He transferred his flag, successively, to his fourth prize, the *Tacony*, and his twentieth, the schooner *Archer*. In the last he sailed boldly into Portland harbor and captured the revenue cutter, *Caleb Cushing*, which was retaken a few hours later. During his consequent imprisonment at Fort Warren, on Jan. 6, 1864, he was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant of the Provisional Navy. He was exchanged in Virginia on Oct. 18, 1864, assigned to the command of Battery Wood below Richmond, and was detached to the command of the torpedo boat division of the James River Squadron in January 1865. Shortly before the evacuation of Richmond, he was ordered to Shreveport, La., to command the seagoing ram *William H. Webb*. Disguised as a Union cotton transport, he ran the gauntlet of the Federal fleet in the Mississippi River but just before gaining the sea he was blocked by the U.S.S. *Richmond*, Apr. 24, 1865. Read beached and fired his ship and escaped with his crew into the swamp where they were subsequently captured. He was again imprisoned at Fort Warren, being released the following July.

After the war he went into the merchant service as an owner-captain and in the rôle of ship broker supplied the Republic of Colombia with a gunboat. He later became a Mississippi River bar pilot and one of the harbor masters of the port of New Orleans. He died at Meridian, Miss., after a painful illness which he bore with an unflinching courage characteristic of the mild-mannered young naval officer whose brilliant record was unsurpassed by any other officer of his rank in either the Union or Confederate Navies.

[C. W. Read, "Reminiscences of the Confed. States Navy," *South. Hist. Soc. Papers*, May 1876; *Register of the Officers of the Confed. States Navy* (1931); *History of the Rebellion: Official Records (Navy)*, 1 ser., vols. I, II; J. T. Scharf, *Hist. of the Confed. States Navy* (1887); E. M. Maffitt, *The Life and Services of John Newland Maffitt* (1906); Clarence Hale, "The Capture of the 'Caleb Cushing,'" *Me. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, 3 ser., vol. I (1904); J. D. Hill, "Charles W. Read, Confederate von Lückner," *South Atlantic Quart.*, Oct. 1906; E. H. Browne, "The Cruise of the Clarence—Tacony—Archer," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, Mar. 1915.] W. M. R. Jr.

**READ, DANIEL** (Nov. 16, 1757-Dec. 4, 1836), musician, the son of Daniel and Mary (White) Read, was born in Rehoboth, later called Attleboro, Mass., and died in New Haven, Conn. He was a descendant in the fourth generation from John Read, who emigrated from Europe about 1630. During the Revolutionary War he served for short periods in Sullivan's expe-

**GRADUATING CLASS OF 1860—25 MEMBERS—WARRANTED AS  
MIDSHIPMEN JUNE 15, 1860.**

Order of general merit.	NAME.	STATE.	DATE OF ADMIS- SION.	Age at date of admission.		ORDER OF MERIT IN—											Demerits for the year.
						Years.	Months.	Naval Tactics.	Theory of Naval Gunnery.	Practical Gunnery.	Astronomy and Navigation.	Chemistry.	The Steam Engine.	Spanish.	Political Science.		
*1	M. S. Stuyvesant.....	Ohio...	Sept. 29, 1856	16	213	2	13	2	6	2	1	1	1	2	1	18	
*2	A. D. Wharton.....	Tenn...	Sept. 23, 1856	16	2	5	3	3	3	3	3	6	5	1	9	38	
*3	J. D. Marvin.....	Ohio...	Sept. 25, 1856	16	11	3	4	2	3	6	2	2	3	3	3	42	
*4	John O'Kane.....	Ind. ...	Sept. 27, 1856	16	10	1	6	5	5	8	3	8	5	48			
*5	S. P. Gillett.....	Ind. ...	Sept. 20, 1856	15	10	4	1	1	1	5	12	4	7	8	50		
6	T. L. Swann.....	Md. ...	Dec. 8, 1856	15	4	7	8	7	11	9	9	7	6	4	8		
7	T. L. Dornin.....	Va. ...	Sept. 22, 1856	16	2	8	13	8	19	4	16	23	12	6	123		
8	S. D. Ames.....	R. I. ...	Sept. 23, 1856	16	2	5	12	4	2	14	12	13	17	11	116		
9	J. C. Watson.....	Ky. ...	Sept. 29, 1856	14	1	18	20	10	10	7	5	6	4	7	63		
10	J. L. Tayloe.....	Va. ...	Sept. 24, 1855	14	11	14	10	20	13	20	23	15	5	9	93		
11	H. B. Robeson.....	Conn.	Sept. 25, 1856	14	2	9	14	9	9	12	13	19	18	12	40		
12	A. R. McNair.....	Mo. ...	Sept. 23, 1856	17	0	10	21	4	6	21	7	8	21	18	43		
13	W. H. Barton.....	Md. ...	Sept. 22, 1856	16	11	12	9	13	12	14	9	16	15	16	8		
14	F. S. Brown.....	N. Y. ...	Sept. 24, 1856	16	6	6	7	11	15	11	12	14	14	15	76		
15	H. De H. Manley.....	Penn.	Sept. 25, 1856	16	6	9	21	15	16	14	16	11	9	17	39		
16	William Whitehead.....	Penn.	Sept. 23, 1856	16	3	16	22	19	8	13	4	10	9	10	69		
17	E. A. Walker.....	Mass.	Sept. 24, 1855	14	9	20	17	23	23	23	8	18	11	19	30		
18	W. S. Schley.....	Md. ...	Sept. 22, 1856	16	11	17	16	16	18	17	17	20	10	22	38		
19	T. L. Harrison.....	Va. ...	Sept. 29, 1856	17	0	15	11	17	22	15	15	21	24	21	77		
20	H. D. Hoole.....	Ala. ...	Sept. 22, 1856	15	9	24	24	14	17	19	20	11	22	11	0		
21	S. D. Faddock.....	Ohio...	Sept. 26, 1856	15	11	19	18	25	24	10	25	22	16	23	143		
22	F. L. Hoge.....	Va. ...	Sept. 20, 1856	15	8	23	19	15	20	22	18	13	19	14	74		
23	S. E. Casey, Jr.....	N. Y. ...	Sept. 25, 1856	16	0	11	12	22	16	18	19	17	20	25	40		
24	Edmund G. Read.....	Va. ...	Sept. 25, 1855	16	1	22	23	24	21	24	24	24	23	20	60		
25	Charles W. Read.....	Miss.	Sept. 20, 1856	16	4	25	25	21	25	25	25	25	25	24	38		

**NOTE.**

Those Acting Midshipmen whose names are marked thus \* are the five most distinguished in their respective classes.

Acting Midshipmen whose names are marked thus † were found deficient, and turned back to recommence the studies of their respective classes.

Acting Midshipmen whose names are marked thus ‡ were found deficient, and being subject, under the regulations of the Naval Academy, to be dropped, were permitted to resign.

The demerits entered in this Register are, by the Regulations of the Navy Department for the Government of the Naval Academy, increased for the members of the

1st Class, one half,

2d " one third,

3d " one sixth.

These additional demerits affect the academic position of the Acting Midshipmen, but no one is held to be deficient in conduct, unless 200 demerits are recorded against him in one academic year.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21402

13 April 1987

Mr. John Read Maynard  
532 Continental Court  
Pasadena, CA 91103

Dear Mr. Maynard:

Thank you for your recent letter in which you request information about your great grandfather, Charles William Read, U. S. Naval Academy Class of 1860.

Our records do not contain information about Charles Read's ancestry, but his "parent/guardian" is shown as Mrs. M. L. Read from Jackson, Mississippi.

Other information relating to Charles Read is as follows:

Appointed from Mississippi on 20 September 1856 at  
the age of 16 years and 4 months

Graduated and appointed midshipman 15 June 1860

Attached to Steam Sloop Powhatan

Resigned 4 February 1861

Became Lieutenant CSN

Died 20 January 1890 Meridian, Mississippi

Enclosed is a photo copy of a page from the 1860 Naval Academy Register which shows his class standing at the time of graduation.

I regret that we do not have information relating to his ancestry but hope that the above will be of interest.

Sincerely,

*Jane H. Price*  
Jane H. Price (Mrs.)  
Assistant Archivist

losure



## Historian's Page

MISS MARY RATLIFF  
Historian

### U. D. C. YEAR BOOK—1923-29

#### SEPTEMBER 10th—FOUNDER'S DAY

"The Women of the Confederacy  
Whose pious ministrations to our  
wounded soldiers,  
Soothed the last hours of those  
Who died, far from the objects of  
their love;  
Whose domestic labors  
Contributed much to supply the wants  
of our defenders in the fields;  
Whose zealous faith in our cause  
Shone, a guiding star, undimmed by  
darkest clouds of war;  
Whose fortitude  
Sustained them under all privations  
to which they were subjected;  
Whose annual tribute  
Expresses their enduring grief, love,  
and reverence; and  
Whose patriotism  
Will teach their children  
To emulate the deeds of our illustrious sires."

—Jefferson Davis

Time of Meeting  
Hostess  
Leader  
"When my Mother Refugee," June  
Heritage.  
Song—"Take Me Home," from book.  
Echoes from Dixie.  
Historian's report to the U. D. C.  
convention, June Heritage.  
Foreword in 1922-29 year book.  
Echoes from Dixie, Noble and Noble,  
76, 5th Ave., New York.  
Price \$1.00.

OCTOBER 20th—J. Z. GEORGE DAY  
Sorrow and pain and anger  
Hatred and death are fled  
It is only Glory lingers  
With the great immortal dead:  
For they knew defeat—what e'er it  
cost  
Could never mean that their cause  
was lost."

Time of Meeting  
Hostess  
Leader  
Captain Charles Read of the Confederate Navy, September Heritage.  
Song—"Dixie Land," from Echoes from Dixie.  
Mississippians in artillery service in Virginia, September Heritage.  
Qualifications for artillery service, September Heritage.  
General Historical study—Confederate officers formerly in the United States army—Paper by Chapter Member.  
The Warren Light Artillery, September Heritage.

NOVEMBER  
Time of Meeting  
Hostess  
Leader  
Withers' First Light Artillery, October Heritage.  
Song—"All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight," Echoes from Dixie.  
The Ram Arkansas, October Heritage.

A Child's Memory of the Building of the Ram Arkansas, October Heritage.

General Historical Study—Stories of Faithful Servants—Paper by Chapter Member.

### CAPTAIN CHARLES READ OF THE CONFEDERATE NAVY

By His Brother Joe Read

Captain Charles Read was called by some, "The Paul Jones of the Confederate Navy." He was born in Yazoo County, Mississippi, May 12, 1839, but when quite young his parents moved to the Downing place near Edwards, Miss. His mother, who was Miss Maria Dotson, before her

marriage to William Read, moved to Jackson soon after the death of her husband which occurred in Sacramento City, California. He with many other Mississippians had joined the "gold rush" of 1849, but died soon after reaching the gold fields. Charles was the oldest of five children, four boys and one girl, youngest being an infant.

He learned the printer's trade in vacations and in the afternoons when school was over, in the office of The Mississippi. Associating himself with a number of other boys in the office and about town he established a little paper called "Scraps of Young America," and he was, at one time its editor. The boys took time about in this position. In one of his articles he aroused the ire of the editor of "The Vicksburg Sun," this paper being noted for its fighting editors who came up to Jackson with the intention of calling him to account.

He attended an amateur performance given by "The Thespian Society," of which Read was a member, in company with a friend who told him that he knew Read and would point him out to him at the play.

The play was Black Eyed Susan and Read took the part of a sailor boy and when he appeared on the stage in his sailor suit he was pointed out to the editor of "Scraps of Young America." He was about 15 years old and small for his age. The editor of the Sun was very much chagrined and said, he was looking for a man, that he did not come to Jackson to fight a boy. In 1856 he received the appointment as cadet to the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, through Hon. O. R. Singleton, member of Congress from his district. He graduated in 1860 and at the time that Mississippi seceded he was on board the U. S. warship "Pohatan," then stationed at Vera Cruz, Mexico. With a number of other cadets and officers from the South he determined to resign at once and return to Mississippi, but was persuaded by the commander to remain on board till the ship reached New York for which point it was under orders to sail.

On reaching New York he went immediately to Washington and after paying his respects to President Lincoln, tendered his resignation to the Secretary of the Navy and started South.

He reported to the Secretary of the Confederate Navy at Montgomery, Ala., and was put on waiting orders, having received his commission as lieutenant in the Confederate States Navy.

He had not long to wait, spending his time with his mother, who was at that time making her home at Raymond, Miss. It was during this time that he won the affection of Miss Rosa Hall, whom he married in November, 1867, after an engagement lasting more than six years.

His first assignment to duty was on the "McCrea," belonging to a fleet on the Mississippi river. He took part in the engagement against Admiral Farragut's fleet below New Orleans, in April 1862.

His commander, Lieut. Hughes was mortally wounded and he was placed in command of the ship. The naval engagement is a matter of history. Lieut. Read succeeded in landing the ships at the wharf at New Orleans, before his vessel, which had been badly crippled in the engagement, went down. He escaped from the city and went at once to Richmond to which place the Confederate capital had been moved and reported to the Secretary of Navy. He was then assigned to duty on the Potomac where he assisted in erecting batteries for the blockade of the river. "The river was rigidly patrolled by Federal gunboats and larger vessels, and transports passed night and day—yet four powerful batteries were constructed at the very river's edge."

Such a lieutenant was not allowed

to remain idle when this duty was performed. He was ordered to report to Commodore Pickney near Fort Pillow. Commodore Pickney gave Lt. Read command of two heavy guns mounted on a bluff four miles below Memphis.

After a short service he received orders to dismount his guns and ship them up White river to Lieut. Fry who he was sent to Vicksburg to recruit men for Pickney's boat. "On the receipt of the news of the fall of Fort Pillow all the river craft were taken up the Yazoo river for their protection. Here the Ram Arkansas was fitted up as an iron clad, having been covered with railroad iron. Lt. J. N. Brown was put in command and Lt. Read was given charge of the stern battery of two guns."

When the ram was ready for service Lt. Brown consulted General Van Dorn then in command of the defense of Vicksburg, as to the part that the Ram Arkansas should undertake. Lt. Read was charged with the task of intercepting and also reconnoitering the position of the enemy's fleet about Vicksburg. The young officer rode all night horse back, reaching Vicksburg, a distance of fifty miles, early in the morning.

The orders that he received from General Van Dorn were to run by the Federal gunboats above Vicksburg, also the Brooklyn and Morton Schooners below, then to proceed down the river and destroy any stray vessels of the enemy in the journey. He was to coal the ship at New Orleans, pass Forts Jackson and Phillip, at night and proceed to Mobile Bay and raise the blockade. The work of the "Ram Arkansas" is a matter of history and its brief but glorious career is known to most Mississippians who have taken any interest in the events of those stirring times when so many heroes were being revealed. Not the least among whom was this boy lieutenant.

After the sinking of the Ram Lt. Read was ordered to the steamer Florida. Delighted at the thought of getting to sea again he lost no time in reporting on board ship. The gallant fight made by the Florida, running the blockade to Mobile Bay, passing under the guns of three Federal ships at close range; receiving two shells through her body; having her rigging cut up; two of her crew killed and seven wounded is also a matter of history.

On the 15th of January 1863 she made her way to sea although the blockading fleet had been strengthened and she was pursued by the Gunboat "R. R. Cuyler." The Florida destroyed fourteen prizes and bonded three while Lieut. Read was connected with her. One of the captures was the clipper ship "Jacob Bell" from Foo Choo, China for New York. Vessel and cargo were valued at \$1,500,000, the most valuable single prize taken by any Confederate schooner. One night while walking the deck with Commander Moffitt, he told Lieut. Read of his purpose of going to the East Indies and China to which Lt. Read dissented and said that rather than go so far away where they could be of no possible service to the Confederacy, he would resign, return to the South and join the army. So, after a long talk the commander agreed to give him the first small vessel he captured and allow him to go ashore.

Very soon after this they captured the Brig Clarence from Rio Janeiro for Baltimore. Lieut. Read reminded the commander of his promise and was highly elated when he told the First Lieut. to call hands to muster on deck and ask for volunteers to go with him. The entire crew volunteered. He selected sixteen men of this number, Billups had been master of a merchant ship. Pride was the quartermaster, Mathewson one of the boatswain mates and Brown an engineer who was an idler aboard. Of these he made officers. With one

single six pound gun they were transferred to the "Clarence" and were soon alone on the high seas. Capt. Read now being master of all he surveyed, began his famous career up the Atlantic coast, the incidents of which sound much like fiction. During their cruise twenty-seven of the enemy's vessels were captured and destroyed or bonded. The crew and the one gun were transferred to the "Tacony," one of the prizes and after a varied experience, during which they came near being captured by a Federal gunboat, he transferred his crew to the "Archer," another prize in order to deceive the enemy who knew that the Tacony had been captured and converted into a "rebel privateer." He then ran into the harbor of Portland, Maine, sank the Archer and captured the Caleb Cushing, lying at anchor in the harbor and took her out to sea. The Caleb Cushing being a sailing ship was overtaken the next day by a steamer with infantry and artillery aboard and after sinking her by cutting a hole in the bottom and setting fire to her at the same time. Capt. Read and crew got into small boats and surrendered to the enemy. Read and crew would have been hung as pirates by the people of Portland had it not been for naval officers who had been classmates of his.

Capt. Read was taken to Fort Warren, Boston harbor, where he was kept as prisoner for more than a year. After his release from prison he was placed in command of a battery of heavy artillery on the James river below Richmond. (Note) He was engaged in a daring expedition on land during this time—in the winter of 1864-5, but I haven't access to papers containing an account of it. His last adventure, during the war, was in April 1865 when he undertook to run the "Webb" from Alexandria on Red river down the Mississippi and out to sea. A full account of which is given by Lieut. W. H. Rice, of Georgia, Miss., who was with him and is published in the "New Orleans Times-Democrat," of May 23, 1903. After the war, Capt. Read being an unpardoned rebel, who could not get service at sea under the United States flag, was compelled to be idle for several months and he spent the time in the country amongst his relatives and friends. In October 1865 he sailed from Havana for Liverpool where he secured the position as master of mercantile ship under the British flag till he received his pardon—you know it was hard for the government to pardon a man whom it regarded as a rebel who had destroyed as much property as he had, even going into one of the New England ports for some of it.

Capt. Read continued to command ships till a few years before his death. He was appointed by the governor of Louisiana, president of the Board of Harbor's Masters at New Orleans.

He died at Meridian, Miss., while on a visit to his old friend Dr. C. A. Rice, who was at that time superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane and is buried there.

### MISSISSIPPIANS IN ARTILLERY SERVICE IN VIRGINIA

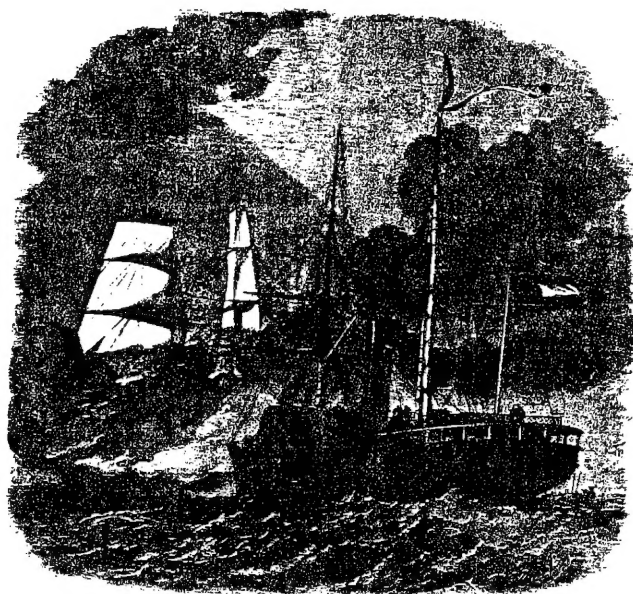
Extracts from "Four years under Mars Robert." Major Robert Stines, Va.

"This Mississippi Brigade of Infantry consisting of the Thirtieth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Twenty-first regiments, was in many respects the finest body of men I ever saw. As a body they were very young men and brim full of irrepressible enthusiasm equally ready for play and for fight. The laugh, the song, the shout, the yell of the rebel charge burst indifferently from their lips, but in any and every case the volume of sound was tremendous."

"I knew almost every man in the brigade and often attended their re-

# THE CONFEDERATE NAVY: A PICTORIAL HISTORY

*by Philip Van Doren Stern*



DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, INC.  
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK  
1962

# "THE MOST BRILLIANT DAREDEVIL CRUISE OF THE WAR"

On May 6, 1863 (when Stonewall Jackson was dying of the wounds he had received at Chancellorsville), the *Florida*, while cruising off the coast of Brazil, captured the brig *Clarence*, bound from Rio to Baltimore. Lieutenant Charles W. Read, the twenty-three-year-old officer whom Maffitt had asked for because of his remarkable combat career on the Mississippi, thought that the *Clarence* could enter Chesapeake Bay because she had clearance papers for Baltimore. He asked for the brig and got her. With a boat howitzer, some small arms, 21 men, and a commission issued by Maffitt to operate as a Confederate raider, he sailed north along the outer rim of the West Indies.

The *Clarence* was too slow to overtake the first ships Read sighted. He did not make his first capture

until June 6, when he took and burned the bark *Windward*. He then captured two other ships. From newspapers found aboard them and from his prisoners he learned that the entrance to Chesapeake Bay was too closely guarded for him to get through. He decided to run along the coast instead.

On June 12 he captured the bark *Tacony* near Cape Henry and decided to use her as a raider because she was a better sailor than the *Clarence*. Before he could move his men and equipment, the schooner *M. A. Shindler* came along. Read quickly captured her and then started to transfer his crew and the howitzer to the *Tacony*. While the deck gun was being taken from one ship to the other, another schooner, the *Kate Stewart* came in sight. Read had nothing to threaten her with except a dummy wooden cannon on deck of the *Clarence*, put there to give the brig a more warlike appearance. The ruse worked, and the captain of the *Kate Stewart* surrendered without realizing how easily he had been gulled.

Read then burned the *Clarence* and the *M. A. Shindler*, bonded the *Kate Stewart*, and sent her off with all the prisoners he had taken. Between June 12 and June 24 he captured 14 more ships.

Meanwhile, the captain of the *Tacony*, who had reached shore on the *Kate Stewart*, hurried by train to Philadelphia to tell the owners of the second vessel what had happened. They promptly sent an indignant message to Secretary Welles.

Welles sent out ship after ship until all available naval vessels were hunting for Read. Commercial steamers and sailing ships were chartered and hurried to sea with orders to stop everything afloat and make a careful search. The Federal fleet rapidly picked up some of the ships Read had bonded and turned loose, so it was fairly well informed of his movements. But he was always one jump ahead of them.

His pursuers did not know that Read's single howitzer had run out of ammunition. When he captured the schooner *Archer* off the Maine coast on June 24 he had exhausted all his shot and powder. He decided to burn the *Tacony* and use the *Archer*.

He turned toward the shore and made Portland light on June 26. Near there, he picked up two local fishermen who thought the schooner was a pleasure vessel and offered to guide her into the harbor. They told Read that the revenue cutter *Caleb Cushing* and a New York passenger steamer were lying at the



LIEUTENANT CHARLES W. READ, CSN



docks. The ambitious young lieutenant wanted to seize them both. He had brought along an engineer from the *Florida* for just such a chance.

(At this time, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was in Pennsylvania, spread out in a wide semicircle from Chambersburg to Harrisburg, while the Union Army was hurrying north. On July 1 they were to meet at Gettysburg.)

Read boldly sailed past the forts guarding the entrance to Portland Harbor and anchored in full view of the city. When he spoke to his engineer, he found him doubtful about being able to start the steamer's engines. Anyway, it would take time to get steam up, and Read knew he could not afford to wait several hours. He decided instead to cut out the revenue cutter *Caleb Cushing*, a well-armed sailing ship. With her eight guns he felt that he could fight his way through anything. Once at sea, he would not be dependent upon getting coal, which was hard for a hunted ship to obtain.

Shortly after midnight, two boats rowed by muffled oars and carrying men armed with revolvers and cutlasses moved silently across the water to the wharf where the *Caleb Cushing* was tied up. Most of the crew and all but one of the officers were at home asleep. A landing boom projecting from the side made boarding easy. Two men on deck were quickly subdued; then some of the Confederates dashed below, where a display of cutlasses enabled them to put irons on a lieutenant and eight or ten sailors. They lost time getting away from the dock because the cable could not be slipped. Worse still, the tide was coming in and the wind was dying down.

The *Archer*, with three of Read's men, had gone ahead. By the time he reached the forts at the harbor entrance the sun was rising. And the desperately needed wind was so slight that it did not even fill the sails.

A search of the presumably well-equipped *Caleb Cushing* turned up only five projectiles for the pivot gun. And there was hardly any gunpowder. More ammunition was certainly on board, but the captured Yankees, even under threats, refused to say where it was.

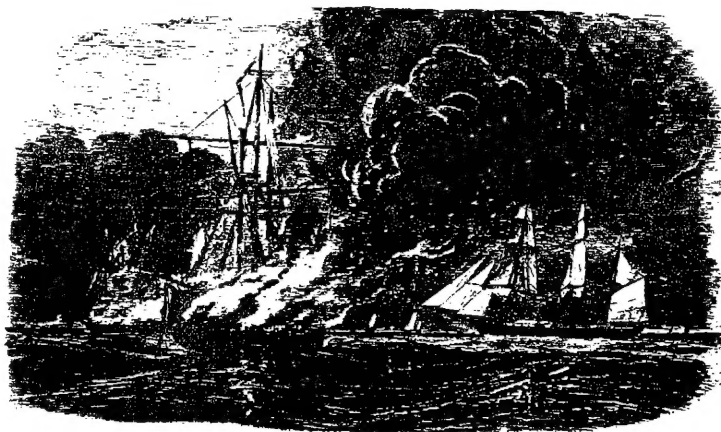
Two steamers with fieldpieces lashed on deck, and accompanied by three tugboats, were seen coming out of the harbor manned by volunteer crews. They headed straight for the becalmed revenue cutter.

Read's first shot went straight at the leading steamer. It ricocheted over the water but fell short. The steamer kept advancing. Read had the pivot gun fired again; again the shot fell short. He used all five projectiles hoping to scare off his pursuers. But they kept steadily coming on. When they got closer, Read ordered the gun to be loaded with scrap iron. The cannon made

a loud noise, but the iron did not go very far.

One steamer looked as if she was going to ram them. Read hastily ordered everyone to take to the boats, and had the *Caleb Cushing* set on fire. White handkerchiefs were used as flags of truce as the two boats were rowed toward the nearest steamer. Soon after Read and his men surrendered and were taken on board, flames reached the revenue cutter's well-concealed magazine. She blew up with a great roar, scattering timbers over the water.

The captured Confederates were sent to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor. Read, whose exploit naval historian Richard S. West calls "the most brilliant daredevil cruise of the war," was exchanged in October 1864. He then served on the James River squadron. His last command was the ram *William H. Webb*, which he ran down the Mississippi in an effort to escape to the Gulf. He almost made it, but was headed off by the USS *Richmond*. He burned his ship before being captured. It was then April 26, 1865, seventeen days after Appomattox.



Read, in the *Tacony*, burning ships along the coast.



The U.S. revenue cutter *Caleb Cushing* just before she blew up.

*File in C.W. Read file.*

# THE SAGA OF THE CSS WEBB

by R. Thomas Campbell

*from the July-August 1994  
issue of "Confederate  
Veteran"*

The spring of 1865 was not the brightest season in the life of the Confederacy. General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was stretched to the breaking point around Richmond and Petersburg. After checking Sherman's "Bummers" briefly in March at Bentonville, N.C., General Johnston was desperately trying to pull the remnants of the Army of Tennessee together to stop him. Sheridan had laid waste to the Shenandoah Valley and the South's last port east of the Mississippi, Wilmington, N.C. had fallen.

On a smaller scale, but no less important to those involved, Lieutenant Charles W. "Savez" Read, CSN, had just returned from his abortive mission along the James River. ("Sevez" was the only word of French he was able to learn at the U. S. Naval Academy, hence his nickname.) Lieutenant Read, a native of Yazoo, Mississippi, had seen his share of fighting in these last tumultuous four years of war. He had been second in command of the C.S.S. *McRae* during engagements in the upper Mississippi River around Island Number 10 early in the war, and took command of the *McRae* at the Battle of New Orleans in April of 1862 when his captain, T. B. Huger, was mortally wounded. Positioning his ship in the middle of the channel, Read fought Farragut's fleet on both sides until the *McRae* was literally shot through like a sieve. Read's next exploit was aboard the Confederate Iron-clad C.S.S. *Arkansas* as it made its mad dash down the Mississippi. Showing his skill as a gunnery officer, Read got in many a telling shot from his two six-inch stern rifles as the *Arkansas* steamed through the middle of the Federal fleets. Later, after the loss of the *Arkansas*, "Savez" reported on November 4th to John Newland Maffitt

Mobile, Alabama for service on the C.S.S. *Florida*. Maffitt, who had run the *Florida* through the blockade into Mobile on September 4, 1862, now had her repaired and refitted and was impatiently awaiting an opportunity to put to sea. Finally, on the dark cold night of January 16, 1863, with heavy rain showers and a

fierce north wind blowing, the *Florida* streaked past the Yankee blockaders and began her destructive cruise in the South Atlantic. In May, Read began a cruise of his own using one of the *Florida*'s prizes as a commerce raider. After capturing twenty-one enemy vessels along the U. S. east coast, he sailed boldly into the harbor at Portland, Maine on the night of June 26, 1863, in an attempt to capture the U. S. Revenue Cutter *Caleb Cushing*. Boarding the cutter in the wee hours of the morning, Read sailed her twenty miles out to sea before being overtaken where he and his crew were forced to surrender. Thrown into prison at Fort Warren in Boston, Read later escaped, was recaptured and finally on October 14, 1864, was exchanged.



Lt. Charles W. Read, CSN

By the beginning of 1865, "Savez" was in command of a squadron of torpedo boats on the river below Richmond. He had devised a plan in February to transport whale boats overland and behind the Union Army to a point below the huge supply base at City Point, Va. There they planned on capturing as many enemy tugs as possible, affixing torpedos to the bow of each, and steaming up the James River, attacking the Federal base from the rear. At the same time, the Confederate James River Squadron would attack down the stream. Taking one hundred twenty sailors and marines, they arrived within a few miles of their objective in a blinding snow and sleet storm, only to learn that a deserter had informed the Yankees of their mission and a trap was being set for them.

Retracing their steps, Read successfully brought his entire command back intact, reaching Confederate lines on February 13th. Not a man, wagon, boat, or mule was lost, but at least seventy-five men of his expedition wound up in the hospital suffering due to the bitter cold from exposure. The Confederacy's heart still beat, however, and as the month of March approached, Lieutenant Read had another idea.

Read took his plan directly to the Secretary of the Navy, Stephen R. Mallory, Read explained, lying at Shreveport, La, on the Red River three hundred fifty miles above New Orleans, was the Confederate ram *CSS Webb*. Read proposed to take the ram down the Red River, run the blockade at the mouth of the river and proceed on down the Mississippi. Of course the Mississippi would be awash in Yankee gunboats, but if by the use of stealth and disguise they could get by them and reach the mouth of the river below New Orleans, he would then proceed to sea in the *Webb* and capture the Federal gunboat *USS Pampero*. The *Pampero* was a 1,375 ton warship mounting four guns, which was engaged in guarding one of the channels leading to the Gulf of Mexico. Once the *Pampero* was in his hands, Read would then turn her into a commerce raider, proceed to Havana, Cuba to replenish her supplies, and then run the blockade back into Galveston Texas, capturing and burning what Yankee ships he might come across on the way! If the *Pampero* was not captured, he would continue on in the *Webb*, using her as a commerce raider. Either way, it was a daring and formable undertaking to say the least.

Aware of all the brave exploits in which this young navy lieutenant had been involved during the war, Mallory probably felt that if anyone could accomplish such a mission it would be Read, and so gave his approval. Taking a few select officers from the James River Squadron, Read left Richmond in mid-March for Shreveport, La. Traveling from Virginia to Louisiana in March of 1865 must have been an ad-

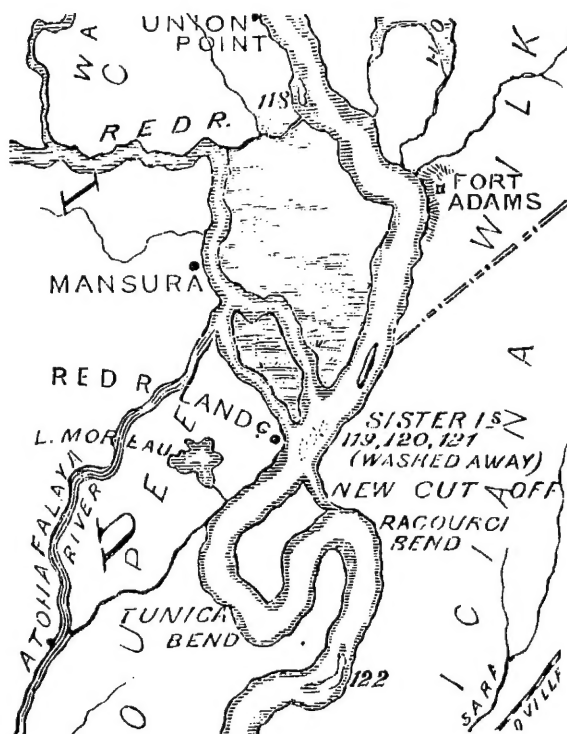
venture in itself! Not only was the Confederacy crawling with Yankee troops, but that grandfather of rivers, the mighty Mississippi, which they would have to cross, had effectively been closed by patrolling Federal gunboats. Showing that "travel" in the Confederacy was still possible,

Read and his naval party arrived in Shreveport in late March. Reporting with his sealed orders from Mallory to Lieut. Jonathan H. Carter, commander of the Red River Defenses, Lieut. Read was given command of the *Webb* on March 31st.

The *Webb* was still in fine condition, but lacked guns and a crew.

Known as the *William H. Webb*, she had been built in New York several years prior to the war and was used there as a tow boat, and as an ice breaker in the winter. Just prior to the outbreak of war, the *Webb* was purchased by a group of New Orleans merchants who used her, because of her powerful engines, for towing heavily laden ships into and out of the harbor. She was a little over two hundred feet long and weighed approximately 655 tons. Her powerful steam engines were of the low pressure type and her huge sidewheels measured thirty-five feet high. When war broke out she was seized at New Orleans by Confederate authorities, and due to her great strength, converted into a ram and gunboat. Heavy solid timbers were placed inside her bow running aft about thirty feet where they were bolted together. A thirty-two inch muzzle-loaded swivel rifle was placed on her foredeck and two twelve pounder howitzers placed on the stern. In addition, two "Quaker" guns (fake guns made of wood and painted black) were fabricated and one placed on each side. In May, 1861, the *Webb* seized three Northern vessels off the mouth of the Mississippi and made prizes of them, sending them with their cargo into New Orleans. Once the Federal blockade was in place, however, her privateering days were over.

Upon the evacuation of New Orleans in 1862, the *Webb* was taken up the Red River to avoid capture. In February of



VIEW OF VICKSBURG FROM THE RIVER.





1863, she descended the river to its juncture with the Mississippi, and in consort with the captured *Queen of the West* and two other Confederate vessels, attacked the Union ironclad *Indianola*. Ramming the *Indianola* several times, the Federal commander was forced to run his ship on shore to keep from sinking and surrendered the ironclad along with its crew of one hundred men. After this action the *Webb* was taken back and stationed at Shreveport, La., where she became part of the Red River Defense Fleet which guarded against Yankee excursions up the river. Now the *Webb* was about to embark on her most daring, and last, journey.

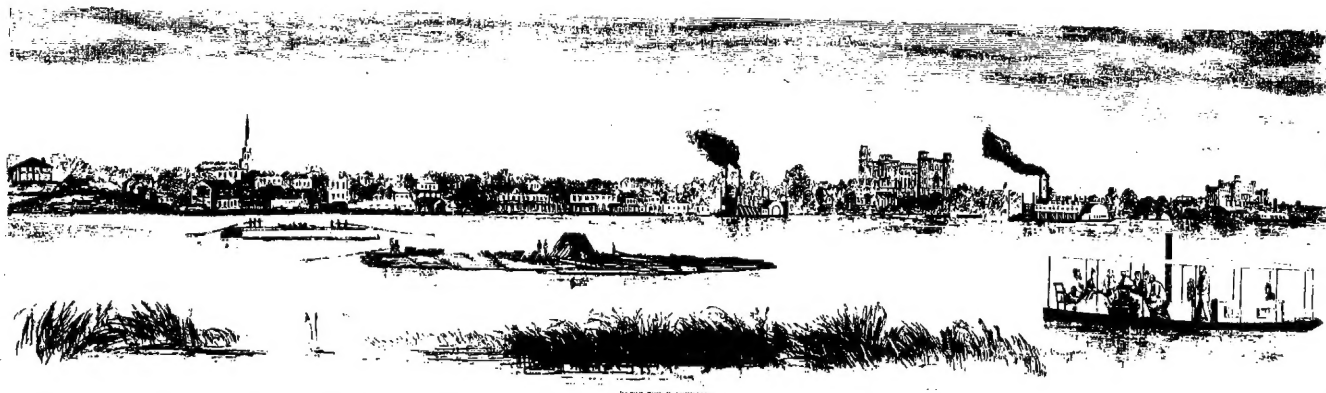
Read set out feverishly getting the *Webb* ready. In a report to Secretary Mallory the day before leaving on the expedition, Read reported that when he took command the *Webb* was missing her guns and most of her crew.

Kirby Smith came to his aid and provided, in addition to small-arms, a thirty pounder Parrott rifle for the bow pivot and two small twelve pounders for the stern. A rough bulwork was built around her forecabin to protect her as much as possible from the sea. She was moved down the river to Alexandria where one hundred ninety bales of cotton were placed on board. These were stacked around her pilot house and machinery to provide some protection against enemy fire.

A one day's supply of coal, all that could be obtained, was loaded aboard. Two hundred fifty tons of pine knots and a large amount of resin, were hauled on board which, when added to her fires, would increase her speed. Water and a month's rations were placed on board and she was given a dirty "white-washing" which would make her more difficult to see at night. William Biggio and James Kelly were both made Quartermasters, and the rest of the crew was made up of volunteers from the Red River Defense Fleet and Army troops from General E. Kirby Smith's command.

Meanwhile, the Federal Navy had gotten wind of the proposed expedition of the *Webb* and to prevent her escape, dispatched the monitor *Manhattan* and the ironclads *Lafayette* and *Choctaw* to reinforce the gunboats guarding the mouth of the Red River. Arranging for General Thomas to cut the telegraph wires along the the Mississippi as far down as Plaquemine by 8:00pm that evening [evidently, this did not happen], Read cast off the *Webb's* lines at 4:00am on the morning of April 23, 1865, and proceeded down river. About forty miles below Alexandria, they stopped at Coot's Landing to take on board two hundred fifty cords of wood, and to fasten a thirty-five foot spar torpedo to her bow. This was to be used against one of the blockading ships if it became necessary. Continuing on slowly, Read timed the *Webb's* speed so as to reach the Yankee blockade at the mouth of the Red River after dark on the 23rd. William Biggio wrote afterwards:

*In front of the Webb, only a few hundred yards distant, lay the Federal fleet of about six vessels. It was a little after eight o'clock in the evening on a starlit night in April when we first descried the enemy's vessels. All of our lights were concealed and we were running very slowly in order not to make much noise. We approached close enough to distinguish every vessel and were within five hundred yards of them before they discovered us. I was at the wheel and we had slowed up the vessel as much as possible preparatory to making the final run of the gantlet. The steam in the engines was very high, and the engineer called to the captain that he could not stand it much longer without blowing the vessel up. At this moment a rocket went up from the Federal fleet, and we knew that we had been discovered. Captain Read then yelled, 'Let her go!' and I rang the fast bell. The engi-*





neer threw the throttle wide open, and the Webb fairly leaped and trembled. 'Keep her for the biggest opening between them!' shouted the captain, and I did as commanded. By this time every whistle of the fleet was screaming, drums were beating, rockets were going up, and it seemed as if the very devil was to pay. I kept the Webb straight on her course, however, headed for the biggest opening, and before a gun was fired we had passed the blockade and had turned the bend and were making down the Mississippi River. We had run the gantlet and were now 'between the devil and the deep blue sea'. After we had gone down the river some distance the Manhattan fired a few shots, but did us no harm. Passing out of (the) Red River, and through the very jaws of death, it was only to encounter new and greater dangers before the Gulf could be reached.

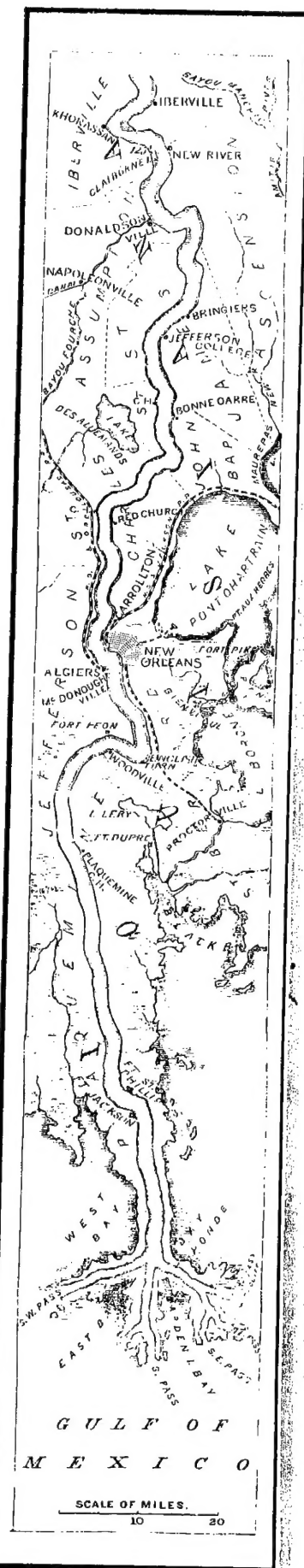
### Greater and more serious dangers did indeed still lie ahead!

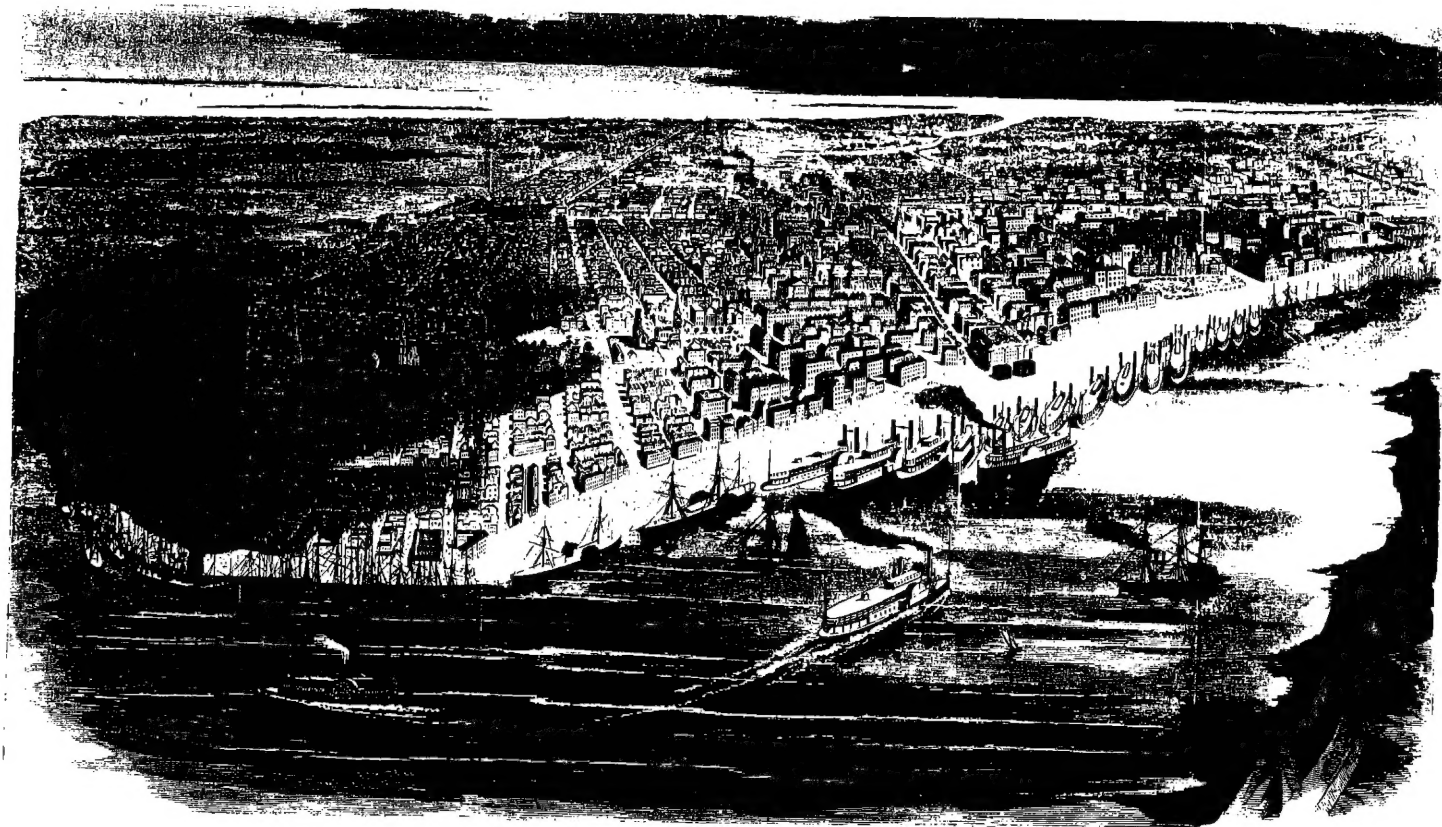
Leaving behind the Federal monitor *Lafayette*, which had started in pursuit, the Webb's speed was slackened and she steamed along easily with the current. The Federals had stationed gunboats in the Mississippi about every five miles and these all had to be passed. During the remainder of the night, the challenge from these gunboats was met with signal lamps. As they would signal the Webb inquiring as to "What ship goes there?", Kelly would signal them back with something they couldn't understand, but by the time the Yankees figured it out, the Webb was gone! When daylight came, the same ruse was practiced using signal flags. Read's plan was to attempt to pass the forts below New Orleans at night which would mean passing the city while it was still daylight. Several times, Read sent a boat ashore and had the telegraph wires cut. Unfortunately, and unknown to Read, a message had been flashed to New Orleans just minutes before the wires went down that the Webb had passed the blockade at the mouth of the Red River. Thus the Yankees had about a three hours notice that the Webb was coming. One problem for them, however, was that since she passed the blockade at night, they really did not know what she looked like.

On nearing New Orleans, Read hoisted the Union ensign at half-mast as a ruse. [President Lincoln had been assassinated only a few days earlier.] He then had his crew don blue Federal overcoats over their Confederate uniforms and instructed them to sit casually on deck and smoke their pipes or play cards. While the Federal fleet was alerted that the Webb was coming they were looking for something that resembled the *Virginia* or *Arkansas* not the innocent looking "army" transport loaded with troops and cotton that was steaming through their midst. By 1:00pm on the 24th, the Webb had passed most of the fleet lying north of the city. It was beginning to look as though their deception would take them all the way to the Gulf.

As they entered the harbor of New Orleans, the Webb passed within a stone's throw of the Federal twenty-four gun sloop, *Lackawanna*. Suddenly, the pilot of the Federal ship, an old steamboat man from New Orleans, recognized the Webb and informed his captain. Orders were shouted and in an instant one of the *Lackawanna's* guns fired. The shot struck the Webb abreast of the forehatch and passed clean through, four feet from the water line without exploding. Read shouted for Kelly to haul down the false colors and hoist the Confederate flag. This time, with pine knots and resin burning fiercely in the furnace, the giant paddle wheels pounded the Webb forward at over twenty-five knots. The *Lackawanna* fired again. The shot was aimed at the pilot house, but struck a bale of cotton and glanced upward passing over the top. A third shot went through the funnel guywires but did no damage. Because the Webb was now running abreast of the docks in downtown New Orleans, the Federal could not fire for fear of hitting their own ships or innocent people who were lining the streets and the levee to watch. The excitement among the citizens thronging the waterfront was intense. Many were waving their hats and cheering the Webb on. After all these long years of occupation, right before their very eyes, a Confederate warship with their nation's sacred banner snapping in the breeze was brazenly steaming right through the midst of the hated Yankees. The frenzy spread like fire. Rumor had it that the vessel contained the gold and silver of the Confederate Treasury; that President Davis and General E. Kirby Smith were on board; and that John Wilkes Booth was at the wheel!

Thousands watched in astonished pride as the Webb flew by New Orleans on that bright Tuesday afternoon. Her torpedo boom was hauled up at right angles to the bow. Every man was at his station, and the engines, under a full head of steam, were working perfectly. Giant rooster tails of spray trailed behind her spinning paddle wheels. The Webb's pointed bow parted the muddy Mississippi waters sending white plumes of spray flying far out to either





THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS.

side. High above from her highest peak, streaming out for friend and foe to see, was that beautiful red and white ensign, that sacred Stainless Banner which was the symbol of the South's hope for freedom. Anchored in the harbor was a French man-of-war. Speeding past, Read dipped his flag, the Frenchman returned the salute. As the *Webb* neared a Federal ship anchored near the main channel Read, thinking it was the Federal gunboat *Hartford*, ordered the torpedo lowered. When it came down, the spar snapped and the torpedo swung dangerously around threatening to strike the *Webb*. Orders were shouted and axes flashed in the afternoon sun, cutting the lines and allowing the torpedo to sink to the bottom. It was just as well, for the "gunboat" was the *Fearnaught*, a Federal ordnance ship filled with over three hundred barrels of gun powder, and if she had been struck by the *Webb*, both vessels would have been blown out of the water!

With New Orleans quickly receding in the background, the *Webb* raced on, but Read now knew that all the Federal forces were alerted. The warships and the guns of the forts would all be waiting. If only they had cut the telegraph wires sooner! Looking back he could see the Federal steamer *Hollyhock* trying to catch him. The *Hollyhock* was a low-bar tow boat much like the *Webb* and almost as fast. Read knew he had to stay ahead of her. Twenty-five miles south of the city, with only a few more miles before the forts and then the open sea, they rounded a bend in the river, only to find the Federal sloop *Richmond* with twenty-four guns blocking the channel. The *Webb* was slowed and Read called his officers together in front of the pilot house. The narrow channel meant they would have to pass immediately under the guns of the *Richmond*. The forts below her were now alerted, and the *Hollyhock* was fast approaching from the north. With saddened hearts, the officers all agreed that their luck had indeed run out. Read ordered Biggio, who was still at the wheel, to run the *Webb* ashore. Turning to port, Biggio headed for the east bank of the river and struck bottom about fifty yards out. Life lines were thrown over the bow and a boat was

lowered. The crew was ordered to make their way to shore as best they could. Meanwhile, Read had ordered the gunner to start a fire near the magazine. Once assured that the *Webb* was burning, Read joined his crew on the river bank. Dividing his men into three groups, they moved inland through the swamps far enough to be out of sight but lingered close enough to still see the *Webb*.

Soon the *Hollyhock* hove to beside the burning *Webb* and attempted to put out the flames with her fire hoses. With the fire burning so fiercely, however, this was soon deemed impossible, and she backed away. After a few more minutes, with a blinding flash, the *Webb* exploded. Not wanting to fall into the hands of the Yankee cavalry patrolling the area, but preferring to surrender to the U.S. Navy, Read and his officers, along with some crew members, returned to the river bank and hailed the *Hollyhock*. Sending a boat, they were received on board the *Hollyhock* as prisoners of war. The rest of the *Webb's* crew were captured the following day by Union cavalry. Conveyed to New Orleans, Read and his crew were marched through the streets of the city like wild animals. Much to the chagrin of the escorting Yankees, however, the people lined the streets and cheered, ladies waved their handkerchiefs and threw flowers in their path. Lieutenant Read, along with some of his officers, was put on board the Federal steamer *Florida* which soon set sail for New York. Arriving there on May 6th, he was later taken to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor where he was imprisoned. Finally, on July 24, 1865, Lieutenant Read was granted his parole and allowed to return home.

After the war, Charles Read became a steamboat pilot in New Orleans guiding merchant ships to and from the Gulf. Many times he must have passed that spot along the river bank where the remains of the *Webb* lay. As he glided past in his nameless merchant vessel, his thoughts must have drifted back to that sunny Tuesday afternoon in April of 1865, when he almost made it! ...Yes, if only those telegraph wires had been cut a little sooner!